

II. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Original) A system for printing postal indicia at more than one location, said system comprising a host and more than one customer station, the host comprising at least one postal security device, said postal security device comprising a secure housing, cryptographic means, and nonvolatile memory, the nonvolatile memory comprising an accounting register indicative of postage value;

each said customer station comprising a television, a set-top box communicatively coupled with the television, a remote control communicatively coupled with the set-top box, and a printer communicatively coupled with the set-top box, said printer disposed to print labels;

said host and each customer station communicatively coupled;

said system further comprising means responsive to information provided by a customer at one of said customer location via the remote control for ordering enhanced television services at the television;

said system further comprising means responsive to information provided by the customer at the remote control at one of said customer stations for sending to the host a first message requesting a postal indicium and identifying the customer station associated therewith, means responsive to the first message for presenting to the postal security device a request for the postal indicium; means responsive to the generation by the postal security device of a second

message indicative of the postal indicium for transmitting information indicative of the postal indicium to the set-top box; and means responsive to said information indicative of the postal indicium for causing said printer to print said postal indicium on a label;

said system further comprising accounting means within said host storing information indicative of postage value printed at each of said customer stations; and means responsive to the message identifying the customer station for modifying the stored information associated with the customer station within said accounting means; said postal security device disposed to make a record in its nonvolatile memory indicative of the postage value communicated in said postal indicium.

2. (Original) A method for printing postal indicia at more than one location, said method used with a system comprising a host and more than one customer station, the host comprising at least one postal security device, said postal security device comprising a secure housing, cryptographic means, and nonvolatile memory, the nonvolatile memory comprising an accounting register indicative of postage value; each said customer station comprising a television, a set-top box communicatively coupled with the television, a remote control communicatively coupled with the set-top box, and a printer communicatively coupled with the set-top box, said printer disposed to print labels; said host and each customer station communicatively coupled; said system further comprising accounting means within said host storing information indicative of postage value printed at each of said customer stations; said method comprising the steps of:

providing information at one of said customer locations via the remote control relating to a requested postal indicium;

sending to the host a first message requesting the postal indicium and identifying the customer station associated therewith;

presenting to the postal security device a request for the postal indicium;

generating by the postal security device a second message indicative of the postal indicium;

making a record in the nonvolatile memory of the postal security device indicative of the postage value communicated in said postal indicium;

transmitting information indicative of the postal indicium to the set-top box;

responding to said information indicative of the postal indicium by causing said printer to print said postal indicium on a label; and

modifying the stored information in the accounting means associated with the customer station indicative of the postage value communicated in said postal indicium.

3. (Original) A system for printing postal indicia at more than one location, said system comprising a host and more than one customer station, the host comprising at least one postal security device, said postal security device comprising a secure

housing, cryptographic means, and nonvolatile memory, the nonvolatile memory comprising an accounting register indicative of postage value;

each said customer station comprising a fax machine and a printer communicatively coupled with the fax machine, said printer disposed to print labels; said fax machine communicatively coupled with the public switched telephone network;

said host and each customer station communicatively coupled;

each said fax machine further comprising means responsive to incoming fax telephone calls for receiving and printing fax messages;

said system further comprising means responsive to information provided by the customer at one of said customer stations for sending to the host a first message requesting a postal indicium and identifying the customer station associated therewith, means responsive to the first message for presenting to the postal security device a request for the postal indicium; means responsive to the generation by the postal security device of a second message indicative of the postal indicium for transmitting information indicative of the postal indicium to the fax machine; and means responsive to said information indicative of the postal indicium for causing said printer to print said postal indicium on a label;

said system further comprising accounting means within said host storing information indicative of postage value printed

at each of said customer stations; and means responsive to the message identifying the customer station for modifying the stored information associated with the customer station within said accounting means;

said postal security device disposed to make a record in its nonvolatile memory indicative of the postage value communicated in said postal indicium.

4. (Original) A method for printing postal indicia at more than one location, said method used with a system comprising a host and more than one customer station, the host comprising at least one postal security device, said postal security device comprising a secure housing, cryptographic means, and nonvolatile memory, the nonvolatile memory comprising an accounting register indicative of postage value; each said customer station comprising a fax machine communicatively coupled with the public switched telephone network; a printer communicatively coupled with the fax machine, said printer disposed to print labels; said host and each customer station communicatively coupled; said system further comprising accounting means within said host storing information indicative of postage value printed at each of said customer stations; said method comprising the steps of:

providing information at one of said customer locations via the fax machine relating to a requested postal indicium;

sending to the host a first message requesting the postal indicium and identifying the customer station associated therewith;

presenting to the postal security device a request for the postal indicium;

generating by the postal security device a second message indicative of the postal indicium;

making a record in the nonvolatile memory of the postal security device indicative of the postage value communicated in said postal indicium;

transmitting information indicative of the postal indicium to the fax machine;

responding to said information indicative of the postal indicium by causing said printer to print said postal indicium on a label; and

modifying the stored information in the accounting means associated with the customer station indicative of the postage value communicated in said postal indicium.

5. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the host system is remotely located from the customer station.

6. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the remote control, upon activation by the user, is adapted to call up a postage submenu relating to postage on a display of the television, the postage submenu adapted to prompt the user to enter identification data associated with the request for postal indicia.

7. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the identification data includes a destination address and a zip code.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein human readable identifier information related to the mailpiece is printed on the label in addition to the indicia.

9. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 further comprising a weighing scale that is communicatively coupled to the set-top box, the weighing scale being adapted to determine a mass of a mailpiece needing the indicia and communicate the mass information to the host for determining an amount of postage to be included in the indicia.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the postal security devices in the host are shared among the customers.

11. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein an operator of the host maintains a set of accounts with respect to each customer, the accounts including accounting information for each customer.

12. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the set-top box further includes a fingerprint reader adapted to authenticate the user to the host.

13. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the host is communicatively linked to a plurality of delivery service providers, and the host is further adapted to retrieve and transmit price comparison information to the television display related to the request for postal indicia.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13 further comprising a postal security device associated with each of the plurality of delivery service providers.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the set-top box further comprises an Internet communication device adapted to transmit and receive information between the customer station and the host over the Internet.

16. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the host further comprises a connection to a plurality of delivery service providers and the host serves as a single point of contact between the customer station and each delivery service provider.

17. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the set-top box comprises a web television interface.

18. (Previously Presented) A method for printing postal indicia at a location remote from a postal security device comprising:

accessing a host data center from a remote location via a communication link, wherein the host data center includes at least one the postal security device adapted to produce cryptographically secure postal indicia, wherein the step of accessing comprises calling up a submenu on a viewing unit at the remote location and inputting identifier information responsive to queries on the submenu;

entering a request for a postal indicia; and

receiving the requested postal indicia from the host data center and printing the indicia on a label via a printer.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the host data center is communicatively coupled to a plurality of delivery service providers and the step of entering a request further comprises the steps of entering a request for a comparison of delivery rates for an item, wherein the host data center is adapted to ~~solicit quotes from each delivery service provider and~~ provide the quotes to the user with price comparison information.

20. (Previously Presented) A system for printing cryptographically secure indicia comprising:

a host data center remotely located from at least one customer site, the host data center including at least one postal security device adapted to generate postal indicia and adapted to be shared among customer sites;

a television based communications interface located at the customer site, the communications interface adapted to allow

- . cryptographically secure postal indicia to be received from the host data center at the customer site;
- a remote data entry unit at the customer site adapted to allow a user to enter a request for postal indicia into the communications interface by activating a pop-up menu and selecting a function indicated on the menu, the function including transmitting a user identifier together with a communications interface identifier to the host data center;
- a printing device at the customer site adapted to allow the received indicia to be printed; and
- an accounting device in the host data center adapted to account for postal indicia sent to each of the customer sites when a single postal security device is shared among a plurality of customer sites.